

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A content addressable memory (CAM) device including a CAM array and a priority index table. The CAM array has a plurality of rows of CAM cells, each row including a plurality of row segments and being adapted to store a data word that spans a selectable number of the row segments. The priority index table is coupled to the  
5 plurality of rows of CAM cells and is adapted to store a plurality of priority numbers, each priority number being indicative of a priority of a corresponding data word stored in the CAM array.